**CLP CURRENT EVENT November 7, 2017**

**TOPIC: OPIOiD CRISIS**



<https://www.nih.gov/opioid-crisis>

**Opioids** are drugs that act on the nervous system to relieve pain. Continued use and abuse can lead to physical dependence and withdrawal symptoms.

www.drugfreeworld.org



http://sdsucollegian.com/2017/11/01/simply-labeling-the-opioid-epidemic-wont-solve-the-problem/

**NEWS SOURCES** (10 total)

**Trump Declares Opioids a U.S. Public Health Emergency**, by Yasmeen Abutaleb and Jeff Mason, Yahoo (Reuters), Oct. 26, 2017

“…Trump's declaration will redirect federal resources and loosen regulations to combat opioid abuse … Some critics, including Democratic lawmakers, said the declaration was meaningless without additional funding. Republican lawmakers called the president's declaration an important step in combating the crisis…”

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/trump-declare-opioids-public-health-crisis-officials-123904400.html>

*CLP: Helpful overview of the President’s declaration and what it may or may not do.*

# Chronic Pain vs. Opioid Crisis: A Medical Dilemma, by Jim Vibert, The Chronicle Herald (Halifax, Canada), Nov. 3, 2017

# “People suffering from chronic pain are at risk of becoming collateral damage in the battle against opioid addiction and abuse…”

# <http://thechronicleherald.ca/opinion/1517458-vibert-chronic-pain-vs.-opioid-crisis-a-medical-dilemma>

# *CLP: concern that solutions to the opioid epidemic negatively impact chronic pain sufferers.*

# New Jersey Sues OxyContin Maker, Links Marketing to Opioid Crisis, by Jonathan Stempel, USNews & World Report (Rueters), Oct. 31, 2017

“… At least 11 U.S. states have sued Purdue (Pharma) over opioids, including a complaint filed by Alaska on Monday…”

<https://www.usnews.com/news/us/articles/2017-10-31/nj-sues-oxycontin-maker-links-marketing-to-opioid-crisis>

*CLP: lawsuits call attention to possible negligence by drug companies*

**ANALYSIS: Native Americans, Among the Most Harmed by the Opioid Epidemic, Are Often Left Out of Conversation**, by Eugene Scott, The Washington Post, Oct. 30, 2017

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2017/10/30/native-americans-among-the-most-harmed-by-the-opioid-epidemic-are-often-left-out-of-conversation/?utm_term=.7216f47cea19>

*CLP: opioid abuse disproportionately impacts Native Americans.*

**Opioid Epidemic Shares Chilling Similarities With the Past**, CBS News, Oct. 30, 2017

“…Yes, this is the most widespread and deadly drug crisis in the nation’s history. But there has been a long string of other such epidemics, each sharing striking similarities with today’s unfolding tragedy…”

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/opioid-epidemic-shares-chilling-similarities-with-the-past/>

*CLP: interesting historical perspective.*

**To Combat the Opioid Epidemic, We Must Be Honest About All Its Causes**, by David Blumenthal and Sanoor Seervai, Harvard Business Review, Oct. 26, 2017

“It’s likely that there are multiple causes of the problem. Doctors ….Pharmaceutical companies … health insurers … socioeconomic forces … Countering the epidemic requires a multipronged approach… ”

<https://hbr.org/2017/10/to-combat-the-opioid-epidemic-we-must-be-honest-about-all-its-causes>

*CLP: excellent, important article; a must-read.*

# DEA Responds to Explosive "60 Minutes"/Washington Post Report About Opioid Crisis, from CBS News, Oct. 16, 2017“Lawmakers and the [Drug Enforcement Administration](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/how-the-dea-efforts-to-crack-down-on-the-opioid-epidemic-were-derailed/) are facing tough questions following an explosive joint investigation by "[60 Minutes](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ex-dea-agent-opioid-crisis-fueled-by-drug-industry-and-congress/)" and The Washington Post that says Congress helped disarm the DEA…”

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/opioid-crisis-dea-responds-60-minutes-report/>

*BBR: posits whether DEA’s ineffective response to opioid problems is a result of personnel changes.*

**How the Government Can Fight the Opioid Epidemic Under a Public Health Emergency**, by Lenny Bernstein, The Washington Post, Oct. 26, 2017

“At this point in the nation's opioid epidemic, fighting back is mainly about quickly making money available: Money for treatment. Money for the overdose antidote naloxone. Money to hire more people …”

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2017/10/26/how-the-government-can-fight-the-opioid-epidemic-under-a-public-health-emergency/>

# Drug Company Founder Indicted in US-Wide Opioid Conspiracy, by Anita Snow and Paul Davenport, Associated Press, ABC News, Oct. 26, 2107

“U.S. prosecutors brought a fraud and racketeering case Thursday against the founder of an opioid medication maker …”

<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/drug-company-founder-indicted-us-wide-opioid-conspiracy-50739374>

*CLP: Rare criminal charges brought against pharmaceutical billionaire*

**America’s Opioid Epidemic is Worsening**, Daily Chart by The Data Team, The Economist, Mar. 6, 2017

<https://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2017/03/daily-chart-3>

*CLP: great map showing overdose deaths by county; helpful chart*

**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER** (17 total)

* What is an opioid?
* What is an opioid epidemic? Will blaming various groups (drug companies, doctors, pharmacists, the Drug Enforcement Agency et. al) be a productive way to fight the epidemic? What would be more effective? How important is public information/knowledge of opioid dangers?
* What role does/can the media play? See this article for more information <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/opioid-crisis-dea-responds-60-minutes-report/>
* What is the difference between declaring a national emergency and a public health emergency?
* How are opioids used for pain management?
* Does the President’s declaration address both the threat of an epidemic and the need for pain management?
* How do doctors respond to the dangers of opioid addiction? How do pharmacists respond to the dangers of opioid addiction? How do patients respond to their need to manage pain?
* Why has opioid addiction become an epidemic?
* Does opioid use lead to the use of heroin and other addictive drugs?
* Are young people more vulnerable to opioid addiction? Are minorities more vulnerable to opioid abuse? Are people in rural communities more vulnerable?
* How is the opioid epidemic related to other societal problems such as jobs, racism, profits of drug companies and health care?
* Why has the opioid crisis become a political issue? Can it be treated as a health issue? How is it similar or different from previous epidemics such as AIDS, EBOLA, ZIKA?
* How can treatment of opioid addicted users be combined with education and prosecution of opioid pushers? Why is it important to treat opioid addiction as a medical problem rather than a crime?
* Is opioid legislation a violation of Constitutional rights? Is opioid legislation an impediment to pain control? Is opioid legislation needed to control a growing epidemic? What is the danger of under-prescribing pain medications?
* What is the Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis?
* Is money the key to fighting this epidemic? How might funding become available?
* Is disposing of pills left in bathroom cabinets a way to avoid abuse?

**BACKGROUND AND More** (4 total)

# Opioids – Brief Description, from NIH-National Institute on Drug Abuse

# “Opioids are a class of drugs that include the illegal drug [heroin](https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/heroin), synthetic opioids such as [fentanyl](https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/fentanyl), and [pain relievers](https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/misuse-prescription-drugs/which-classes-prescription-drugs-are-commonly-misused) available legally by prescription… An opioid overdose can be reversed with the drug [naloxone](https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/opioid-overdose-reversal-naloxone-narcan-evzio) when given right away…”

# <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids>

# *CLP: short overview in plain English*

# Public Health Emergency Declaration from U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services

“The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) may, under section 319 of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act determine that: …”

<https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/legal/Pages/phedeclaration.aspx>

*CLP: official site for legal requirements for the declaration of a public health emergency*

**ANALYSIS: Opioid Crisis: Five Ways to Tackle the US Drug Epidemic**, Report from the Aspen Institute, BBC News, Aug. 6, 2017

## “…Stop overprescribing…Provide access to treatment…Stop unnecessary deaths…Overdoses don't have to be fatal…Treat opioid addiction as a health issue…Invest in data and knowledge…”

[**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-40479686**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-40479686)

*CLP: readable, concise, helpful*

**Drug Overdoses in Youth** from National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens (NIH), revised Feb. 2017

<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/drug-overdoses-youth>

*CLP: fact sheet; lesson available under different tab.*

**Lesson Plans** (5 total)

# Investigating the Heroin and Prescription Opioid Epidemic: A Lesson Plan, by Michael Gonchar and Caroline Crosson Gilpin, The New York Times, May 4, 2017

***“…****this lesson deals with a sensitive topic and some videos might include disturbing images, all resources should be previewed before being used with students…”*

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/04/learning/lesson-plans/investigating-the-heroin-and-prescription-opioid-epidemic-a-lesson-plan.html>

*BBR: includes video that may be disturbing; lesson is fact based*

## **Learning about Opioids Lesson - Tragedy & Hope: Stories of Painkiller Addiction**, from OPB Learning Media

“Addiction is a disease of the brain, … because the brain is still developing until approximately age 25, individuals who begin to use drugs while they are young are more likely to develop an addiction.”

<https://opb.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/7f567e4a-0572-4c69-a25c-8d7e4b77b69d/learning-about-opioids/#.wen47bnsxgm>

*CLP: uses video segment, downloaded materials*

**Drug Overdoses in Youth** from National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens (NIH), revised Feb. 2017

<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/drug-facts/drug-overdoses-youth>

*CLP: fact sheet; statistics; click on Teacher tab for lesson plan*

# Politicians Struggle With Opioid Epidemic in New Hampshire from PBS Newshour Extra

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/daily-videos/politicians-struggle-with-opioid-epidemic-in-new-hampshire/>

*CLP: good lesson but New Hampshire-focused*

# What Are the Effects of Opioid Addiction on Young People? from PBS Newshour Extra. Oct. 10, 2017

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/daily-videos/facebook-live-how-to-talk-to-students-about-opioid-addiction>

*CLP: includes video, fact sheet, discussion questions*

**Constitutional & Legal Connections** (5 total)

**Drug Testing – Federal Court Opinions: Mandatory Suspicionless Testing of Student Athletes Ruled Constitutional**, Findlaw

<http://education.findlaw.com/student-rights/drug-testing-federal-court-opinions.html>

*CLP: 4th Amendment. Overview of* Vernonia v Acton *case decided by the US S.Ct. upholding drug testing of student athletes, and its subsequent impact on drug searches of students.*

**Ten Ways the War On Drugs Violates the U.S. Constitution**, by Clarence Walker, The Fix, Apr. 10, 2014

<https://www.thefix.com/content/how-drug-war-violates-constitution>?

*CLP: one-sided; raises questions.*

## **Should State Lawmakers Limit Opioid Prescriptions?** by Warren Rivera, Addictionblog.org, May 2, 2017

“…look at the current landscape… review some basic guidelines and lessons learned… offer some insight into how the laws might create new markets for illegal drugs…and new problems...”

<http://prescription-drug.addictionblog.org/state-opioid-laws-prescribing-limits/>

*CLP: raises concerns about enacting laws and illicit drug use*

From **nEWS SOURCES**, see also:

# New Jersey Sues OxyContin Maker, Links Marketing to Opioid Crisis, by Jonathan Stempel, USNews & World Report (Rueters), Oct. 31, 2017

<https://www.usnews.com/news/us/articles/2017-10-31/nj-sues-oxycontin-maker-links-marketing-to-opioid-crisis>

# *CLP: lawsuits call attention to possible negligence by drug companies*

# Drug Company Founder Indicted in US-Wide Opioid Conspiracy, by Anita Snow and Paul Davenport, ABC News (Associated Press), Oct. 26, 2107

<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/wireStory/drug-company-founder-indicted-us-wide-opioid-conspiracy-50739374>

*CLP: Rare criminal charges brought against pharmaceutical billionaire*

**OREGON** (3 total)

# Opioid Overdose and Misuse, Oregon Health Authority

# “Oregon has one of the highest rates of prescription opioid misuse in the nation … An average 3 Oregonians die every week from prescription opioid overdose…”

<http://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PREVENTIONWELLNESS/SUBSTANCEUSE/OPIOIDS/Pages/index.aspx>

# Oregon Lawmakers Try to Stem Opioid Epidemic, by Andrew Selsky, U.S. News & World Report (Associated Press), Apr. 10, 2017

“Seeking to stem the opioid epidemic in Oregon and prevent overdose death the House of Representatives unanimously approved a proposed law …”

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/oregon/articles/2017-04-10/oregon-lawmakers-try-to-stem-opioid-epidemic>

*CLP: Compromises required to pass bill. Update: OR Senate passed HB 2114, signed by the Governor May 25, 2017.*

From **Constitutional & legal CONNECTIONS**, see also:

**Drug Testing – Federal Court Opinions: Mandatory Suspicionless Testing of Student Athletes Ruled Constitutional**, Findlaw

<http://education.findlaw.com/student-rights/drug-testing-federal-court-opinions.html>

*CLP: Oregon’s* Vernonia v Acton *case decided by the US S.Ct.*

**For Oregon SOCIAL SCIENCE Standards**

8.8 Evaluate information from a variety of sources and perspectives.

8.14 Explain rights and responsibilities of citizens.

8.26 Examine a controversial event, issue, or problem from more than one perspective.

8.27 Examine the various characteristics, causes, and effects of an event, issue, or problem.

8. 28 Investigate a response or solution to an issue or problem and support or oppose, using research.

HS.9 Identify historical and current events, issues, and problems when national interests and global interest have been in conflict, an analyze the values and arguments on both sides of the conflict.

HS.14 Create and use maps, technology, imagery and other geographical representations to extrapolate and interpret data.

HS.15 Analyze and illustrate geographic issues by synthesizing data derived from geographic representations.

HS.27 Examine functions of process of United States government.

HS.28 Evaluate how governments interact at the local, state, tribal, national and global levels.

HS.29 Examine the structures and functions of Oregon’s state, county, local and regional governments.

HS.33 Explain the role of government in various current events.

HS.34 Explain the responsibilities of citizens (e.g., vote, pay taxes).

HS.35 Examine the pluralistic realities of society (e.g., race, poverty, gender, and age), recognizing issues of equity, and evaluating need for change.

HS.57 Define, research, and explain an event, issue, problem or phenomenon and its significance to society.

HS.58 Gather, analyze, use and document information from various sources, distinguishing facts, opinions, inferences, biases, stereotypes, and persuasive appeals.

HS.59 Demonstrate the skills and dispositions needed to be a critical consumer of information.

HS.60. Analyze an event, issue, problem, or phenomenon from varied or opposing perspectives or points of view.

HS.61 Analyze an event, issue, problem, or phenomenon, identifying characteristics, influences, causes, and both short- and long-term effects.

HS.63. Engage in informed and respectful deliberation and discussion of issues, events, and ideas.

**For Connections to lessons in *We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution* texts**

**Middle School, Level 2**

* Unit 6, Lesson 29: What are the rights and responsibilities of citizenship?
* Unit 6, Lesson 30: How might citizens participate in civic affairs?

**High School, Level 3**

* Unit 6, Lesson 34: What is the importance of civic engagement to American constitutional democracy?
* Unit 6, Lesson 37: What key challenges does the United States face in the future?